



U.S. Senator Wayne Allard
U.S. Representative Joel Hefley



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SENATOR ALLARD, REP. HEFLEY INTRODUCE FORT CARSON BUFFER ZONE BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) and Colorado 5th District Representative Joel Hefley introduced the Fort Carson Conservation Act of 2005 in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives on Tuesday.

“This bill implements a common-sense solution to the problem of encroachment at Fort Carson,” Senator Allard said. “It will safeguard the Army’s ability to maintain a first-class training facility while protecting critical wildlife habitat and open space.”

“Dwindling open spaces around military installations has forced many endangered species to take refuge on military training ranges,” said Hefley. “Many times, this makes the ranges useless for training. This bill would create environmental buffer zones to help maintain both our natural habitats and military readiness.”

The Fort Carson Conservation Act of 2005 will direct the Army to establish a pilot program by entering into agreements with willing sellers to purchase conservation easements around Fort Carson. These easements, to be administered by the Nature Conservancy, will prevent the encroachment of development upon the base while preserving the habitat and open space surrounding the base.

“Encroachment on training ranges is a problem at many military installations throughout the country,” Senator Allard said. “The successful establishment of a buffer zone around Fort Carson will provide an example for other bases around the country as we seek to protect the training mission of the U.S. military while preserving critical habitats on our ranges.”

“We have learned that encroachment not only threatens military readiness, but the livelihood of a base itself,” said Hefley. “This legislation will help maintain Fort Carson's training objectives, ensuring its own survival, while also ensuring the survival of critical habitats.”

“This legislation will help ensure the future viability of training at Fort Carson. The Mountain Post continues to be one of the Army's crown jewels and the easements that this bill will provide will help ensure that the Army continues to get the training it needs for decades to come,” said Jeff Crank, Senior Vice President of the Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce. “The continued leadership shown by Senator Wayne Allard and Congressman Joel Hefley on military issues serves our community well and helps to ensure the vitality of Colorado Springs' largest economic sector - the military.”

The Allard-Hefley bill enjoys widespread support from the local community and elected officials, including the Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, the Colorado Department of Transportation, Great Outdoors Colorado, the Nature Conservancy, Colorado Springs Mayor Lionel Rivera, Colorado Springs City Councilman Jerry Heimlicher, El Paso County Commissioner Chairman Jim Bensberg, El Paso County Commissioner and Vice Chair Sallie Clark, El Paso County Commissioner Wayne Williams and El Paso County Commissioner Dennis Hisey.

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